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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/08/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNFICYP](#) [CY](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: CYPRUS: ROC UNHAPPY WITH SYG REPORT, DOWNPLAYING
LEADERS' MEETINGS REFERENCES IN UNSCR DRAFT

REF: A. NICOSIA-EUR/SE EMAIL OF 12/09/08 WITH MFA DRAFT
UNSCR ATTACHED
[1](#)B. STATE 126048

Classified By: DCM Jonathan Cohen, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) The Cypriot Foreign Ministry on December 9 summoned resident P-5 chiefs of mission for consultations on the second, UK-distributed draft of the UNFICYP rollover resolution. DCM called on MFA Permanent Secretary Nicolas Emiliou to receive the MFA demarche. Emiliou considered the draft an improvement over the first version, but reported that his government still had concerns and observations it wanted to raise (Ref A contains suggested Cypriot changes).

Past (and Present) Masters at Word-Parsing

[1](#)2. (C) Emiliou called preambular paragraph (PP) 4 "positive" in describing the preferred governance model to be a bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality as set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, but was troubled by its reference to the leaders' joint statements during the preparatory phase of negotiations. "These statements do not form the basis for a solution," he maintained; "UNSCRs do." Mention of the agreements between Demetris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat instead could fall in PP5, which commended their political leadership. As motivation for the G/C wish to downgrade the significance of the meetings (at least as far as the resolution text is concerned), Emiliou cited Talat's "spurious" interpretation of the joint statements, especially that of May 23. He said that by casting doubt on his commitment to single sovereignty and single citizenship, Talat was undermining the points that had convinced Christofias to call for full-fledged negotiations.

[1](#)3. (C) Turning to PP7, which concerned buffer zone crossing points and the international community's hope that Limnitis might be next, Emiliou voiced RoC dissatisfaction with the final clause, "encouraging implementation of this commitment on the basis of (sic) mutually agreed approach." Greek Cypriots believed there already existed agreement between the leaders to open Limnitis, he explained, and this language put that in doubt. A better-worded PP7 would conclude as such: "...look at the possible opening of the Limnitis/Yesilirmak crossing point, and encouraging implementation of this mutually agreed commitment." Similar fixes should go into Operative Paragraph (OP) 7, Emiliou suggested.

14. (C) Cyprus preferred the Security Council "taking note" of the Secretary-General's report, vice welcoming it, as currently written in OP1. Emiliou relayed that his government harbored misgivings with the latest report, notably its incorrect assertions on the basis for a Cyprus solution and the absence of mention of the recent maritime incidents in the RoC's claimed EEZ. On the former, he argued the report had harmed G/C interests by noting the leaders had only "discussed" the new state's single sovereignty/single citizenship -- "when in fact they had agreed on it" -- and had dropped the customary "as defined in relevant UNSCRs" proviso after its reference to political equality between the communities. This was an unwarranted change in favor of the Turkish Cypriot position. Emiliou understood that the current text for OP1, which "welcomes the analysis of developments on the ground over the last six months," had appeared verbatim in prior UNFICYP reports. "But that was before there were disputes over the basis for a solution."

15. (C) The aforementioned maritime incidents, in which a Turkish Navy vessel had pressured RoC-charted seismic research vessels to cease activity in waters that Turkey also claimed, deserved mention in a separate paragraph, Emiliou asserted. This text, in OP8bis, would "urge all parties to avoid any action that could lead to an increase in tension and undermine the good progress achieved so far."

Taken Under Advisement, But...

16. (C) The DCM replied that he had guidance to respond to several Cypriot requests, and would report back to Washington and New York on the remainder. In regards to OP1, the United States welcomed the UNFICYP report in its entirety. Further, it was our inclination to use the UNFICYP rollover and UNSCR to keep the Cyprus negotiations moving forward. "We might have even preferred 'endorses' to 'welcomes,'" he added. Further, the USG was pleased to see reference to the leaders' joint statements, which provided the basis for their current engagement and for much of the USG's recent Cyprus policy. As to their placement either in PP4 or PP5, he offered to refer the issue to Washington and New York.

17. (C) The USG preference on PP7 lay actually in utilizing stronger Limnitis-related text that earlier had appeared in the leaders' May 23 statement, which committed them to pursuing the crossing's opening. As to the alleged mutually-agreed approach, he noted the sides' differing interpretations of agreements and events occurring during the preparatory phase of negotiations. T/Cs, he clarified, did not believe there was an agreement to open Limnitis, but rather believed that its quid-pro-quo was the construction of an access road to the mixed village of Pyla from the Turkish Cypriot-administered area. Emiliou disagreed there had ever been such a deal, but agreed that the USG-favored text on PP7 was an improvement over the current version.

18. (C) Maritime incidents such as those between the Turkish Navy and the RoC-contracted research vessels did not belong in the UNFICYP report or rollover UNSCR, the DCM stated. The USG took the matter seriously, however, and had already engaged both the Greek and Turkish governments in hopes of lowering tensions and urging a diplomatic resolution to competing maritime claims. He repeated Ref B points that the USG supported Cyprus's rights under international law to declare an EEZ and continental shelf, regularly informed U.S. companies to obtain all necessary permits before commencing work there, and hoped the latest RoC-Turkey friction would not stall a positive outcome of the Cyprus settlement talks. While not taking a position on the location of the delimitation lines, he stressed that we would continue to urge all involved to exercise restraint and resolve differences through discussions, not on the high seas. In response, Emiliou agreed that the maritime incidents did not relate directly to UNFICYP's work. They unfortunately had marred the climate surrounding the talks, however. While

"current damage had been contained," tension could easily flare again, he thought. Mention of the incidents in the UNSCR might cause Turkey to think twice before acting similarly.

Comment

19. (C) Both lower-level MFA contacts and mainstream Cypriot media have reported the RoC's general satisfaction with the UNFICYP report and UNSCR draft, at least in comparison to prior iterations. We see no reason to doubt their observations after this meeting. Emiliou's word-parsing and mild protests pale in comparison, for example, to prior tongue-lashings at the hands of MFA pit bulls like PermSec predecessor Sotos Zakheos. We do find troubling the RoC's continued attempt to discount the leaders' joint statements, especially the May 23 declaration that met T/C demands for a partnership arrangement with politically equal constituent states.
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